

PREHISTORY, LUCAS CRANACH AND DAVID ČERNÝ:

THE EXHIBITION BOHEMIA-SAXONY FOCUSES ON CULTURAL TIES OF THE TWO NEIGHBOURS

The large exhibition *Bohemia–Saxony: So Close and Yet So Far* at the Sternberg Palace of the National Gallery Prague presents for the first time the theme of neighbourly relations. On display will be Stone Age artefacts, mediaeval documents and sculptures, paintings by Lucas Cranach, Jan Kupecký or Oskar Kokoschka and a model of the well-known statue *Quo Vadis* by David Černý.

“The exhibition concentrates on the dynamic relations between Bohemia and Saxony detailing the close ties between their inhabitants, their conflicts and reconciliations. Nine thematic parts document the symbiosis of art and history of the day-to-day and economic life. Many artworks are displayed in the Czech Republic for the first time,” says Marius Winzeler, Director of the National Gallery Prague’s Collection of Old Masters.



*Lucas Cranach the Elder
St Christine, c. 1520,
NGP*



*Herma of St Ludmila, first third
of the 14th century, The
Metropolitan Chapter of St Vitus*

The story of mutual relations opens in the Stone Age with examples of ceramics and jewellery. The exhibition takes the visitor to the Bronze Age, Iron Age and migration period. The oldest times are represented by unique artefacts, such as findings in the burial place in Prague-Zličín dating from the fifth century A.D.

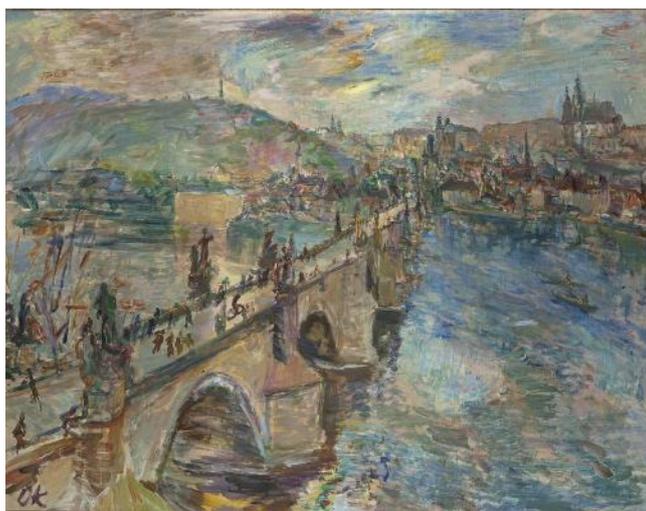
“Bohemia and Saxony are separated both politically and linguistically today, but by the first millennium A.D. they still spoke the common Slavonic language. The border between the two countries is one of the oldest in Europe – it was open most of the time facilitating a rich artistic and economic exchange. It began to be heavily guarded only in the 20th century,” adds the NGP curator Olga Kotková.

The Sternberg Palace will display valuable Gothic and Renaissance artworks, such as paintings by Lucas Cranach, brilliant artefacts in the mannerist style, high-Baroque canvases (such as the Portrait of Painter David Hoyer from Leipzig by Jan Kupecký, which is on display for the first time in the Czech Republic), masterpieces of Romanticist landscape painting or paintings by Oskar Kokoschka.

“The exhibition will also present a new acquisition of the Collection of Old Masters – the painting Salome with the Head of John the Baptist by Cranach’s most talented pupil, Master IW, dating from c. 1525, which the National Gallery purchased last year from a private collection abroad. It is a unique acquisition, as it is very likely that the painting was commissioned by one of the members of the well-known Šlik family. When the property of Jáchym Ondřej Šlik was confiscated after the Battle of White Mountain, the painting was owned by the Bádenský margraves and returned to Bohemia only after four hundred years,” says Olga Kotková.



Master IW, Salome with the Head of John the Baptist, c. 1525, NGP



Oskar Kokoschka, View of Hradčany and Charles Bridge, 1935, NGP

The history of Bohemian-Saxon relations ends with a model of the well-known sculpture *Quo vadis* by David Černý. The Trabant car on four human legs is a reminder of the events in autumn 1989, when the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Prague became a temporary asylum shelter for East German citizens.

The exhibition was prepared by the National Gallery Prague in cooperation with the Staatliches Museum für Archäologie Chemnitz, where it was shown from September 2018 to March 2019.

The exhibition is accompanied by a large Czech-German catalogue with essays, pictures and a list of exhibits on display. It includes a guide to the major artefacts.



David Černý, Quo Vadis, 1990, Garden of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Prague

BOHEMIA–SAXONY: SO CLOSE AND YET SO FAR

May 24 – September 15, 2019

Venue: Sternberg Palace

Project led and curated by: Doreen Mölders (smac), Marius Winzeler (NGP), Olga Kotková (NGP)

The exhibition was prepared by the National Gallery Prague in cooperation with the Staatliches Museum für Archäologie Chemnitz. The exhibition was held in smac (Chemnitz) from September 28, 2018 to March 31, 2019.

The exhibition is held under the auspices of Andrej Babiš, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, and Michael Kretschmer, Prime Minister of the Free State of Saxony.

Printed materials and images

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